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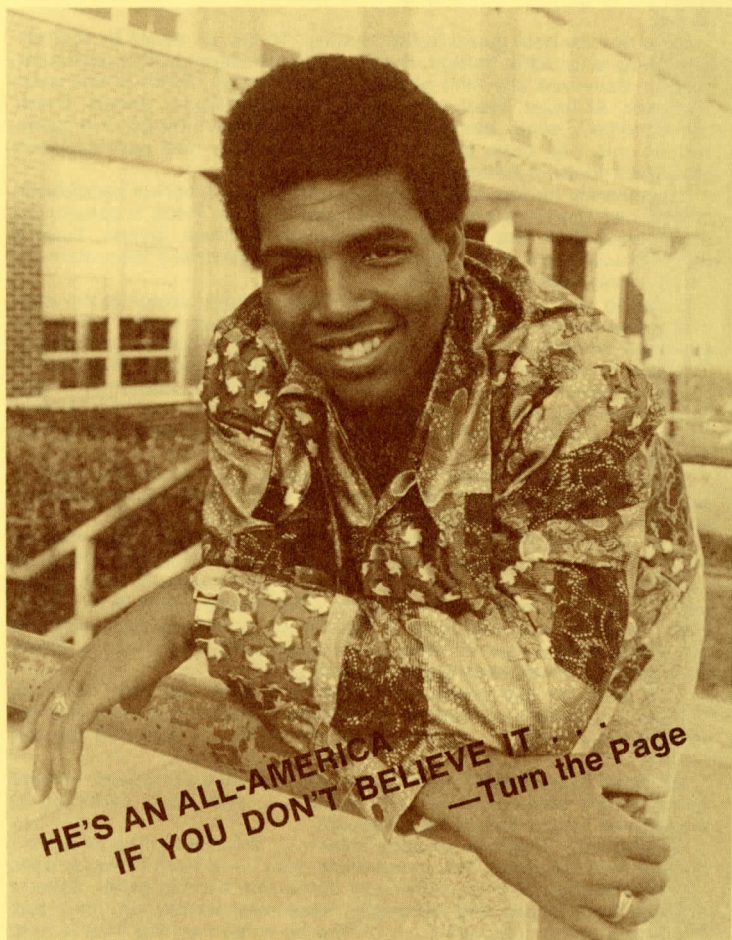
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Larry Finch pamphlet, Memphis State University, 1973

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MEMPHIS STATE'S



HE'S AN ALL-AMERICA
IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE IT . . .
—Turn the Page

“Larry Finch is All-America timber. He’s some kind of player. He’s great!”

—Coach Al McGuire, Marquette

**LARRY FINCH IS AN
ALL-AMERICA**

LARRY FINCH IS AN ALL-AMERICA

LARRY FINCH has become a legend at Memphis State. His name, his exploits, his mannerisms, his style of play and sportsmanship will never be forgotten—not only as a basketball player, but as a human being!

He is not the best guard in the country. To say so would be foolish. One thing is for sure, though, if any collegiate player at this particular position deserved any kind of All-America honors, Finch is that kind of player. At times, more often than not, in particular games, Finch has become a super being. He has literally taken charge of a game and no one has been able to stop him. Writers and sportscasters have even found it difficult to describe.

Consistently he has beaten the opponent's All-America candidates at their own games. He out-played Louisville's Jim Price, a consensus All-America pick last season, in three consecutive games. Tulsa's Steve Bracey, now a successful pro, was beaten more than once by Finch as were countless others.

Game in and game out, Finch has been a major factor in the play of the Tigers. Not regarded as a playmaker in high school where he amassed incredible scoring records, Finch was called upon not only to adjust to college and to collegiate basketball — which at Memphis State happened to be in the tough Missouri Valley Conference — but to become floor leader, playmaker, leading scorer, and "Mr. Everything," for Memphis State's nationally-ranked basketball teams. The results are history . . .

MSU was 18-8 in 1970-71 with Finch, as a sophomore, the leading scorer and assist leader. MVC coaches and media representatives voted him Sophomore of the Year for his outstanding play.

Last year, in 1971-72, Finch, as a junior, was Player of the Year in the MVC — unanimously selected over All-America Jim Price of Louisville. He averaged nearly 26 points a game against MVC opposition (highest scoring average since Chet Walker). For that matter, Finch himself was compared to Walker on countless occasions by more than just a few of those individuals who would know. Finch continued to break record after record . . .

This year, he has continued where he left off last year. He has, once again, been a key reason for Memphis State's rise back into national prominence . . . to the top of the MVC . . . and into the top twenty.

He owns almost every scoring record in MSU's collection—single game, single season, three-year career . . . and he is expected to erase even others before he's through.

Off the floor, Finch is a happy fellow . . . a leader in his neighborhood. He's concerned, too, about those 'kids' — a word he never uses — in his section of town, especially those who want to excel. Several articles, both locally and nationally, have been written on Finch and his efforts in the community . . . of how he volunteers his time to help them with their particular games.

He is concerned!

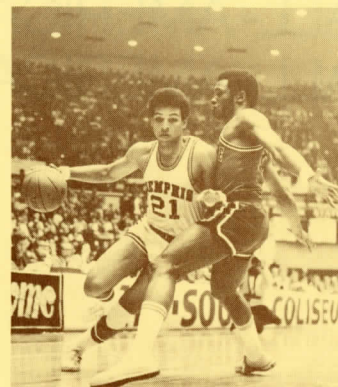
He is a first-class individual!

Sometimes flashy—only when he has to be—Finch always comes out a winner—very seldom beaten.

For three years now around the Missouri Valley Conference — which covers more square miles than any other conference in the land and has direct newspaper, radio and television exposure to nearly nine million people — everyone has talked about Larry Finch . . . and he deserves everything he's received.

Unfortunately he will not receive as many awards and accolades as others across the nation — others who, truthfully, don't even fall into Finch's class. But one thing is sure — LARRY FINCH IS AN ALL-AMERICA FOR MEMPHIS STATE!

Thanks for your consideration,
Bill Grogan
Sports Information Director
Memphis State University

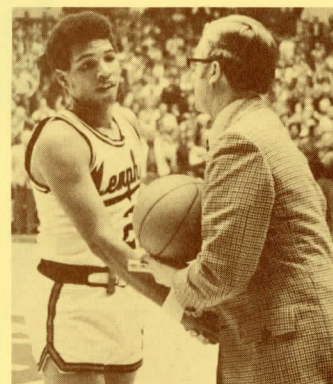


"Larry Finch is as good a player as I've ever played against."

—Louisville's Jim Price

"If there's a better guard in the country, I don't know where he is . . . he's the best college guard, I've ever seen . . . If he doesn't make All-America team before he's through, something's awfully wrong."

—Gene Bartow, Memphis State head coach



"Larry Finch is one of the greatest sportsman on the court and off. He deserved to be an All-America last year and I know the people in Memphis will be disappointed if he does not become one this year. As far as we're concerned, he is an All-America."

Anonymous



Finch spends a great deal of his extra time working with neighborhood "kids."

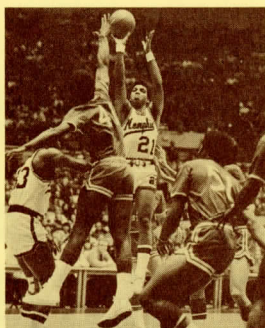
Photo by Charles Nicholas Courtesy of The Commercial Appeal



"If Finch isn't an All-America, I don't know who is . . ."

—Jim Chones, former Marquette player

Volumes upon volumes could be written about the accomplishments of Larry Finch, as could be written on all All-Americas. Unfortunately you do not have the time nor I, the space, for such a testament. It is hoped that this pamphlet will serve as an instrument through which you may know why those of us at Memphis State consider Larry well deserving of All-America status. It is not the normal type of All-America publication, but Larry is not the normal type of basketball player. Thanks for your time.



"Without a doubt, the greatest college guard I've ever seen."

—Head Coach Gene Bartow

"I've seen a lot of great guards in college and Larry Finch ranks right at the top . . ."

—Denny Crum, Louisville
Head Coach

L A R R Y F I N C H

Here's what Larry has done:

AS A SOPHOMORE:

- All-Missouri Valley Conference.
- Led team in scoring (18.4 avg.) and in assists (5.0 per game).
- Led team in free throw percentage (.763).
- Cast in role of floor leader/playmaker for the first time in career.
- Selected to the Basketball Weekly Sophomore All-America team.

AS A JUNIOR:

- Named Player of the Year in the MVC beating out All-America Jim Price of Louisville.
- Led the MVC in scoring (25.9 avg.)—the highest average since Chet Walker's 26.1 in 1960-61.
- Was ranked 28th nationally in scoring.
- Led Memphis State in free-throw shooting (.839)—ranking him 20th nationally, in assists (120), and in points (669).
- Scored 20 or more points in 24 of 28 games.
- Was in double figures in 27 games.
- Scored 20 or more points in a half on nine separate occasions.
- Was the leading scorer in 19 games.
- Was the second player in MSU history to score 600 or more points in two seasons.
- Selected to several all-star, all-regional teams and Basketball News' third-team All-America team.
- District 5 All-America selection
- District 3A All-America selection.
- Named to Marquette's 5-man All-Opponent team.

RECORDS BROKEN BY FINCH:

- Most points in a game (48 vs. St. Joseph's)
- Most points in a season (669, 1971-72)
- Most points in two seasons (1,216, 1970-71, '72-73*)
- All-time leading three year scorer*
- Most assists in a season (140, 1970-71)
- Most assists in a career (331, 1972-73*)
- Most field goals in a season (241, 1971-72)
- Highest point average for a season (23.9, 1971-72)

RECORDS WITHIN GRASP:

- All-time leading scorer (1,854 pts., a four-year mark). Finch has 1,695 pts. through 77 games.
- Highest career-point average (21.1), Finch has averaged 21.6 through 77 games.

IN HIS CAREER (77 games) FINCH:

- Has averaged 21.6 points per game.
- Has averaged 4.3 assists per game.
- Has scored in double figures in 74 games.
- Has been the leading scorer in 45 of the 77 games.
- Has scored 20 or more points in one-half in 17 games.
- Has averaged only 2.5 turnovers per game.

FINCH'S THREE-YEAR TOTALS*

Year	G	FG-FGA	Pct.	FT-FTA	Pct.	Reb.	Asst.-Avg.	PF-D	TP	Avg.
1970-71	26	167-415	.402	145-190	.763	96	140-5.0	78-2	479	18.4
1971-72	28	241-527	.457	187-223	.839	72	118-4.2	90-4	669	23.9
1972-73*	23	194-444	.437	159-195	.815	25	83-3.6	74-6	547	23.8
TOTAL*	77	602-1386	.435	491-608	.808	193	331-4.3	242-12	1695	21.6

* 1972-73 season still in progress . . .

MAKING IT HAPPEN

(Excerpts from an article written by Mr. David Fox which appeared in the *MID-SOUTH* magazine section of *THE (Memphis) COMMERCIAL APPEAL*, Sunday, January 28, 1973. Photos by Mr. Charles Nicholas. Used with permission . . .)

By David Fox

Larry Finch finds the headlines on the MSU basketball court, and equal satisfaction in bare-ground games with the Select Street kids.



"The young guys still have a lot of things to go through, and I want to help if I can."

Mrs. Finch's unassuming certainty of her son's feelings finds substantial basis in his past performance.

He has been the male head of the family ever since his father died 13 years ago. With seven younger brothers and sisters, the job hasn't been easy.

"I go home four or five nights a week to be with the kids," says Larry, who has his own dormitory room on the Memphis State campus. His mother works at night, and, although several of the brothers and sisters are old enough to watch out for the younger ones, Larry likes to be around.

"One of the main reasons I stayed in Memphis to go to school was my family. This is my home, and I still enjoy being with my family. The young guys still have a lot of things to go through, and I want to help them if I can."

There is no trace of obligation in his tone when Larry talks about his family. He seems to have a gift of enjoying everything he does and everything with which he is associated.

"I like Memphis," he says, "because it has been good to me. You take someone who moves around a lot, like the players jumping from place to place in pro basketball. They find they're getting something for nothing, and they don't get any pleasure from it. I get a lot of recognition, but then I get a lot of my pleasure out of things that don't give any recognition."

His greatest unrecognized pleasure, aside from his family, is the work he does with other youngsters. For the past three summers, Larry has passed up more glamorous, high-paying jobs to work for the Park Commission, helping boys age 8-14 learn to play basketball.

"When I tell a kid to do something that is hard, I can just watch the determination in his eyes when he thinks he can do it," Larry says. "And then to see him do it — man, that has got to give you some kind of pleasure!"

Willie Smith, a 13-year-old who lives near Larry and is a good friend of his younger brothers, played two summers for "coach" Finch.

"Most guys in college don't have much to do with young guys," Willie says, "but Larry treats everyone in the neighborhood like he was our big brother."

However, brotherhood ends and coaching begins when the boys step onto the basketball floor. Every day, once in the afternoon after Larry got home from summer school and once at night, Larry put his team through their practice paces at the Melrose Junior High gym.

"He worked us hard," 14-year-old James Stewart says with a low, emphatic whistle. "I mean, he ran us just like a regular coach. But he was fair. I don't care if you were the worst or smallest guy on the court, or the cockiest. He'd do everything he could to help everyone that came out for the team."

Mrs. Maple Finch cannot remember the time when there was grass in the yard of her home at 2558 Select. And with good reason.

Mrs. Finch, you see, has five sons, and any weekend it is not unusual to find either a pickup basketball game in the back yard or a touch football game in the front yard.

What would be unusual would be to find either game going on without Larry Finch, the oldest son, right in the middle of the action.

Say the name "Larry Finch," and the image which flashes into the minds of sports-conscious Memphians is No. 21, senior guard, streaking down court for the Tigers of Memphis State University.

An all-Missouri Valley Conference performer two straight years, Larry Finch was not only last year's most valuable player, but also was selected the most valuable athlete in the conference.

And yet this most valuable star of national note can be frequently found down on his knees in the front yard of his home, trying to hold that line against a squad of 8-year-olds. Who would believe it?

His mother, for one, would believe it, and like any mother, she has nothing but good things to say about her oldest son.

"Sure, Larry plays ball with the kids," she says with the energetic frankness that characterizes the whole family. "He has always been good with children, especially the little boys. He loves his family and enjoys being with them."

Another of Larry's pupils, Michael White, says, "He made you feel proud of yourself, because he was proud of you."

Pride and self-confidence are two traits "coach" Finch demands of his players, and of himself.

"If any of the guys I coached were in a tight game, and there was a foul shot coming up," he says, "I think they would all want to shoot it."

Larry coached about 30 boys each of the past two summers. Not all of them had the physical abilities of Michael White, James Stewart and Willie Smith (who developed into the starting front line for Melrose Junior High this year), but they all found something useful and enjoyable to do with their summer vacations.

"Summers seem to be a good time to get in trouble, if you don't have something to do," Larry says. "We never had a gym to go to when I was a kid, because schools were closed. So we played outside a lot, and you really had to want to play. If you didn't, you'd end up standing down at the corner with a bunch of guys, and that's where the trouble starts."

"Anyway, once we got to playing, we couldn't stop. On my high school team (at Melrose), four of the five starters lived right there next to each other, and we played all the time. Once we played in the snow. It was so cold the ball busted, and all we could think about was where to get another ball from."

A secondary education major at Memphis State, the 21-year-old basketball star has managed to spend some time with boys in the classroom, too. One of his instructors, Mrs. Betty Owen, worked with Larry in a couple of courses dealing with handicapped children.

"One of the boys Larry worked with was blind," Mrs. Owen says. "Larry taught him to dribble with both hands, and, by the end of their sessions together, he could shoot a lay-up, if we hit the backboard for him. Larry has a great talent for working with kids."

Larry is planning more work with youngsters next summer. He hopes to set up clinics for underprivileged boys around the city.

"I got the idea at a free clinic at LeMoyne-Owen last year. About 50 guys were there having a great time. I'd like to do that same thing — have clinics lasting about a week, for all the kids who can't come up with \$25 or so to go to some camp. I'd like to give them T shirts or something that would mean something to them."

He is frank and optimistic about the possibilities and problems involved in setting up such clinics, but the idea does not seem too far-fetched for someone with past actions to back up the words. . . .

. . . The fatherly advice he was denied by the death of his own father also was supplemented in school by two people who have counseled him many times over the years — Verties Sails, his former assistant coach (now head coach) at Melrose, and Mrs. Mildred Turner, now a teacher at Wooddale Elementary but who taught at Melrose Elementary when Larry went there. . . .

. . . Coach Sails — who was more brother than coach to Larry, according to Mrs. Turner — calls Larry "the greatest high school guard" he has ever seen.

"He comes over to school or to my house a lot, and we talk about things that are on his mind," Coach Sails says. "He never even thought he would go to college until his senior year at Melrose, when all those recruiters started coming around. He had confidence in himself, but he didn't know what other people thought. . . .

. . . Larry calls Mrs. Turner his godmother," although it is just an affectionate title, between the two of them. They first met when he was a boy, running around the halls of Melrose Elementary.

"He was little then and had been sick a lot," she says, "but every time I saw him, he was running up the stairs or something. . . .

Summing up her own influence on Larry, Mrs. Turner says with a laugh, "He is very receptive to guidance."

Larry's childhood provokes a number of smiles from his friends, and they all have their stories about him.

Like the times he used to go to school without lunch money. Larry wouldn't ask anyone for anything, but coach Sails got around that by sending him to the store for the coaches and having him buy himself something, too.

Then there was the time Larry slid off the back of a car and opened up a gash in his right arm that took 21 stitches to close. "That's where my number, 21, came from," Larry says, smiling. "And I've been wearing it ever since."

Or there was the time when Larry came down with spinal meningitis and spent six months in the hospital. He was in the fifth grade then.

Those close to Larry are amazed at how far he has come, with all the problems that have beset him. But they are even more amazed at his dedication to the things he feels are important.

"He has a love for his family and for kids that is something he will never lose," says Coach Sails.

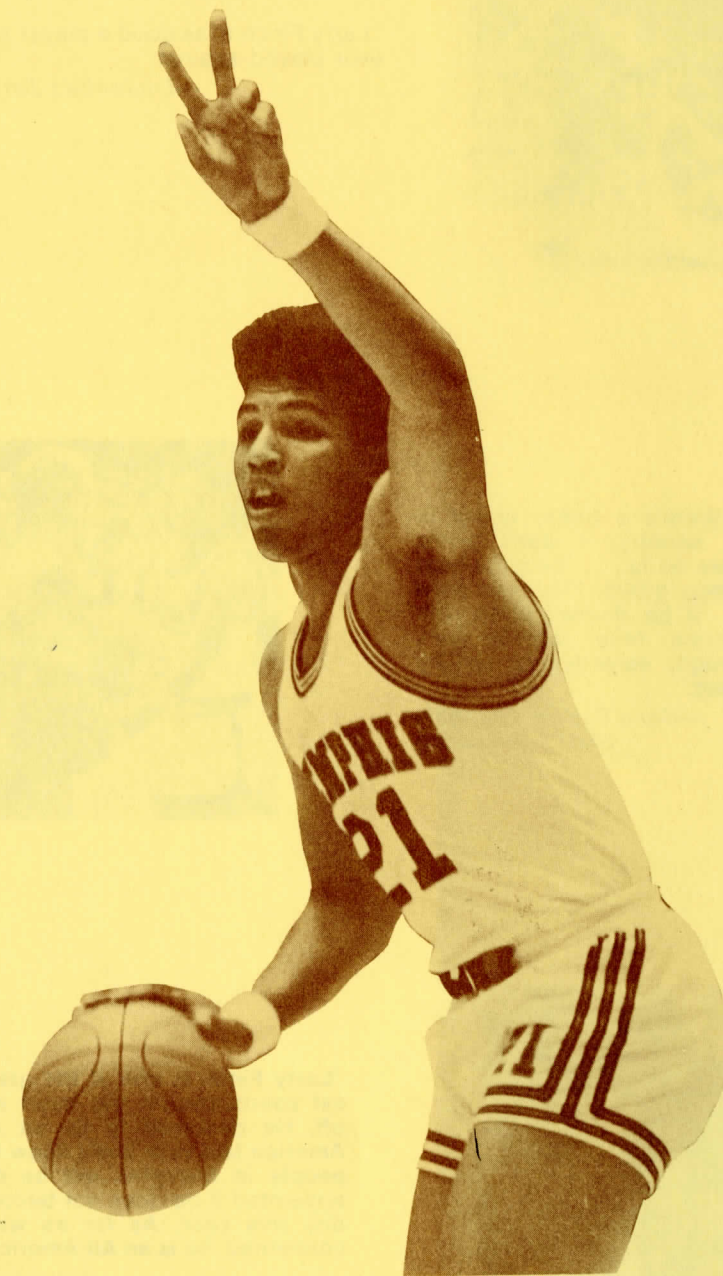
After this year, Larry's plans — if he has the opportunity — are to play pro basketball. He should have the opportunity.

In Larry Finch's dormitory room, there are paintings on the walls, an abundance of phonograph records, and closets shimmering with the color combinations of his clothes.

Also on the wall, over Larry's bed, is a sign that says, "Make It Happen."

That sign sums up his basketball career to date. And he has made it the slogan for his whole life.

LARRY FINCH IS AN ALL-AMERICA LARRY FINCH IS AN ALL-AMERICA



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